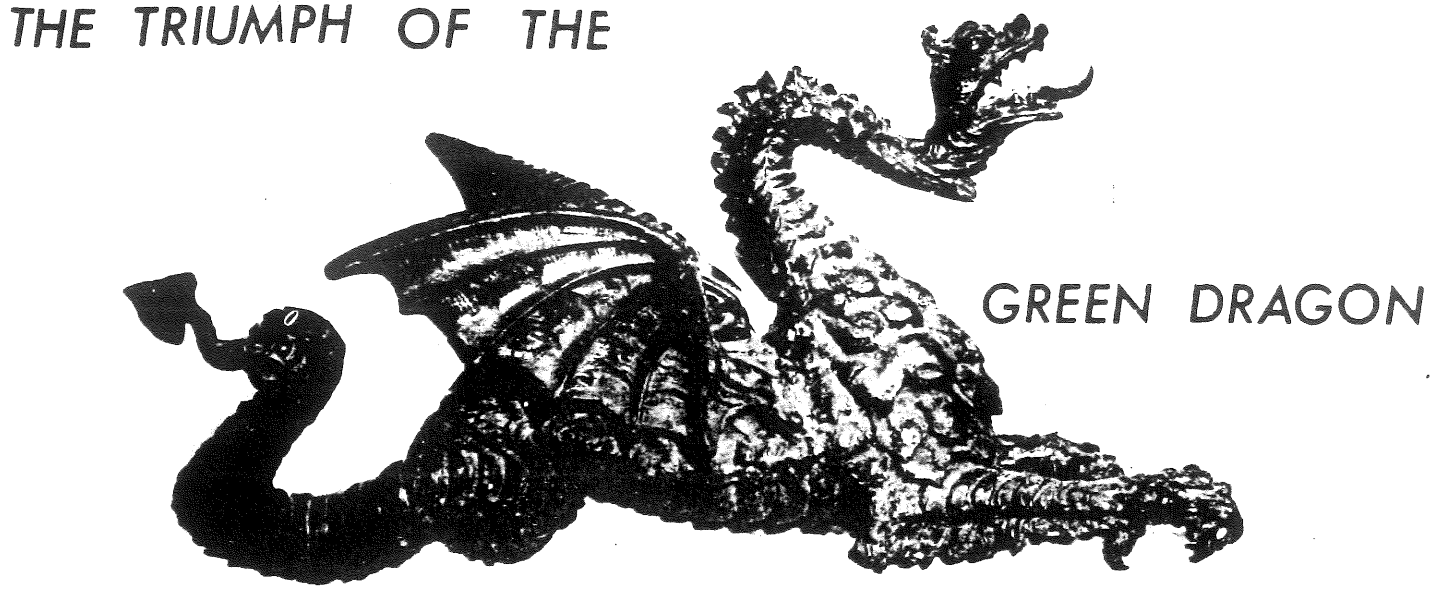
And they adored the DRAGON . . .
and it was given unto him to make war with the saints,
and to overcome them. And power was given him
over every tribe, and people, and nation.
Apo. 13:4-9.



Replica of the original Green Dragon of the Tavern of that name on Union Street, Boston. Acquired by The Lodge of St. Andrew early in 1764, this building continued to be its meeting place long afterward. The Massachusetts Provincial Grand Lodge was organized here under Joseph Warren, by a deputation from the Grand Master of Scotland, 1719. Dragon is made of bronze and measures over three feet from the tip of its tail to its out spread claws.

The U.S. Catholic Church of America: Part One

by Solange Hertz

The American Catholic Church (as distinct from the Catholic Church in America) can be said to have received its official charter from the New World's first revolutionary government in 1798, when Judge Addison, President of the Court of Common Pleas of the Fifth Circuit of Pennsylvania, decided a lawsuit between the first U.S. Catholic Bishop, John Carroll, and a recalcitrant German Franciscan priest called Fromm: "The Bishop of Baltimore has the sole episcopal authority over the Catholic Church of the United States. Every Catholic congregation within the United States is subject to his inspection; and without authority from him no Catholic priest can exercise any pastoral function over any congregation within the United States."

This extraordinary decision, hardly remembered today, injected the virus of the Revolution into the veins of Catholicism in America long before Vatican II did the same for the Church universal, for it recognized in principle a democratically selected, state-approved prelate as sole ruler of any Catholics who would ever reside in the U.S. Hailed by many as evidence of the new Constitution's sterling sense of religious propriety, it is actually a flagrant example of arbitration by secular authority in a purely ecclesiastical matter reserved to the Holy See. Its key words are certainly "The Catholic Church of the U.S.," for this is exactly what is here discerned and objectivized. Judge Addison saw the issue clearly.

And so did the recently consecrated John Carroll, only Bishop in the U.S. at the time, who availed himself of the decision. He knew whereof he spoke when he said, "In the U.S. our religious system has undergone a revolution, if possible, more extraordinary than our political one." As the American Revolution provided the dress rehearsal for the French Revolution and all subsequent revolts against Christendom, thus did the American Church first show Catholics the world over how to set their pace to the new politics.

Unfortunately there was little difficulty in setting the precedent, for the Fr. Fromm in question who disputed the episcopal authority was unhappily one of many renegade clergy who had

Copyright Solange Hertz, 1976

sought to escape just censures at home by taking refuge in the colonies. Priests were so scarce in America, many were accepted into hierarchical ranks who normally would have been excluded. Fr. Fromm, who died outside the Faith, and who had apparently desired to set up his own German-speaking, laity-owned parish for less than pure motives, succeeded in throwing the whole question of lay trusteeship and ethnic parishes into a bad light, making it appear that whoever supported such programs were persons rebellious to Church authority and right government.

That this was true in some cases cannot be denied, but the problem was in fact more complicated, more visceral, and fraught with the direst consequences to the Faith on these shores. This can be seen more clearly in the so-called "Reuter's Schism" which took place in Baltimore the very next year: Fr. Cesarius Reuter, armed with letters of authorization from the Holy See, had proceeded to construct a church for German-speaking Catholics which was to be independent of Carroll's strictly American jurisdiction. Such has always been Mother Church's way, profoundly respecting the nationalities and cultures God Himself had created, and in which He saw fit to embed the Faith.

As citizens in a wholly artificial nation suddenly put together from scratch by English Masonry, the non-English speaking faithful especially found their plight unbearable. Finding themselves being indiscriminately boiled down in the democratic melting-pot ably stirred by their English-speaking Bishop, and torn from all the natural supports true nationality gives the Faith and which were theirs by divine ordinance, they fell prey to justified misgivings. Reuter and his congregation fought hard, begging Rome to place them under a German Bishop, but despite Rome's help in the beginning, they were ultimately forced to submit to the one American Bishop sanctioned by the revolutionary government in the Fromm precedent, and who furthermore had lost no time in excommunicating Reuter.

Protesting to the Holy See, representing the German pastor as a serious disturber of the peace, Bishop Carroll wrote, "We live among non-Catholic sects, and there is no hope of the civil magistracy or the secular powers putting these stubborn men in their place." (Strange words in view of the Fromm decision so recently handed down!) "Therefore, it seems to me that it is of grave importance to strengthen the episcopal jurisdiction rather than to lessen it by exemptions; for, if the power of the Bishop fails, then all hope of regulating the moral conduct of the clergy and the laity perishes."

In the face of the dilemma, deeming it best to keep the Church under one head during its precarious American infancy, Rome backed down, but lifted the censure placed on Reuter by Carroll, having initially warned the latter that excommunication was much too severe a punishment under the circumstances. The scandal nevertheless continued for four years. That Reuter was not motivated by schismatic motives is clear from the fact that he asked the Bishop in 1801 to be restored to his priestly functions. He was accepted, but under the ironclad condition that he recognize the See of Baltimore as absolute, and that if a German church should in fact ever be permitted, it "shall not be entitled to the rights of a parochial church, but only as a chapel of ease to St. Peter's Church" -- the Baltimore Cathedral. Devoted as he was to the ideals of '76, the Bishop had no intention of extending democratic privileges to "foreigners." Reading the records today one is struck by his insensitivity to the spiritual anguish of the uprooted recalcitrants, and his apparent lack of concern for their salvation in the face of the implacable demands of authority, so inconsistent with his liberal tendencies. Not that the situation didn't require a strong hand, but one is strangely reminded of the blind "obedience" demanded from traditionalists by intolerant ecclesiastical liberals two centuries later.

The controversy was waged hotly on both sides not only in Baltimore, but in Philadelphia by Frs. Goetz and Elling and other localities well into the nineteenth century and later. Whenever the Roman Curia moved to accede to the just complaints of the nationals, it would be met with reports such as the one submitted in 1834 by the Curia's own Cardinal Weld (altar boy at John Carroll's consecration and friend of the family) in which were set forth the "special conditions" existing in America which Rome was presumably incapable of understanding. Summarizing points made by the radical Bishop of Charleston, John England,(who habitually preached in Episcopalian and Presbyterian churches), the report reads in part: "The Americans are extremely patriotic; and are not inclined to be hospitable to foreigners who may be placed over them. Some of the priests in the United States not only do not become citizens but also declare their preference for foreign institutional methods. Nothing convinces the American people more quickly of the alleged incompatibility of Catholicism with the American Republic. . . "

In a letter to Propaganda from Baltimore on April 19, 1799, Fr. Reuter had accused Bishop Carroll of forcible attempts to Americanize the Germans. It would be useless to deny the truth of the accusation, for Carroll's support of the Revolution and all its principles -- separation

of Church and state, sovereignty of the people, freedom of conscience, universal equality, etc.-- is well documented. In the English colonies the juridical Church had no past as in Europe, and Carroll's ilk felt free to innovate in conformity with the new order. Closely following the civil policy of the Founding Fathers, he sought to transform as quickly as possible all existing Catholic nationalities into the perfect "American Catholic" with no pre-existing cultural ties, in a spirit more than faintly smacking of the "new man" of Rousseau and Mao.

A case in point was his desire to introduce the vernacular into public worship. Be it noted however, that the only vernacular in question was English, which in Anglo-Saxon Protestant America was to become the new sacred language, and for the foreign-born, far more incomprehensible than Latin ever was. Could he have been conscious of the unspeakable irony when he wrote in 1787: "Can there be anything more preposterous than an unknown tongue? And in this country either for want of books or inability to read, the great part of our congregations must be utterly ignorant of the meaning and sense of the publick office of the Church." He was especially concerned about "the poor people and Negroes" who could not read. "To continue the practice of the Latin liturgy in the present state of things must be owing either to the chimerical fears of innovation or to indolence and inattention in the first pastors of the national Churches in not joining to solicit or indeed ordain this necessary alteration." (Like George Washington, who speaks in his Diary of the Germans as "so ignorant they can speak only Dutch!")

Later as Archbishop, in the Agreement signed in 1810 by him and his newly appointed suffragan bishops, he stipulated that the Sacraments be administered in the vernacular, except for the essential formulas. "Thus the first liturgical regulations in the U.S.," writes Fr. Andrew Greeley in The American Catholic Experience, "conceded to American clergy the same privileges which were to be won again only with great difficulty in the collectio rituum of the 1950's and then to be taken away again until after the Vatican Council." America is indeed a land of pioneers.

God knows how many souls were lost to the Church by these first attempts to strip Catholics of their natural means of spiritual communication with one another and their Holy Mother in Europe. Despite the losses, however, the influx of Catholic immigrants became so great that statistics actually showed a stead "growth" of the Church here, slyly attributed to democratic freedom of conscience. Total population of the Colonies was about 3,000,000. The English Bishop Challoner, in his "Account of the Condition of the Catholic Religion in the English Colonies of America" in 1763, estimated there were some 16,000 in Maryland, about half of whom approached the Sacraments, and six or seven thousand in Pennsylvania, almost all Germans. Numbers elsewhere were negligible due to the harsh laws against them. So successful, however, was the Americanization policy that in due time the entire Church was affected.

In 1946 Fr. Philip Hughes would say in his Popular History of the Catholic Church that in 1789 the English population of the universal Church was "utterly negligible," and that "it is doubtful if there were so many as half a million English-speaking Catholics, and of these not 50,000 were of English blood." And although "English Catholics are still not a numerous body, . . Catholics who speak the English language must, today, number close on 50 millions, one-sixth of the total Church." And these, it must be added, almost all indoctrinated from the cradle in the false principles of modern democracy, which they do not even think to question! If Vatican I did not actually originate in America, she certainly provided the first proving-ground for its reforms.

✦

There were three men, all Carrolls and all Catholics, on whom the architects of the American Revolution depended to draw the Catholic colonials, and especially the Tory Maryland colony, into its ranks: John Carroll, his brother Daniel, and their cousin Charles. The first, spoken of thus far, was a Jesuit priest; the second a politician; and the third a financier. They constituted a powerful triumvirate without whose leadership it is difficult to understand the paradox of the "Catholic revolutionary," a contradiction in terms.

Catholics of the period found themselves between the devil and the deep blue sea, for although they had little enthusiasm for England's terrible penal laws, their religion did not condone defiance of legitimate authority. Nor could they be expected to join forces with the Dissenters and Nonconformists who largely made up the revolutionary rabble, and whose fanatical anti-popery was if anything worse than the Church of England's. As Charles Evans pointed out in American Bibliography, "the struggle for civil liberty in the American colonies assumes something of the nature of religious warfare, in which the dissenting churches are opposed to the Established Church of England." It is being increasingly admitted that the Revolution was actually an anti-Catholic movement, at least in its origin.

Martin Griffin, in Catholics and the American Revolution, says mere oppressive taxes and restrictions on popular rights could hardly "have moved the body of the people to acts of resistance had not Religion been a moving force upon the minds of the people. The active malcontents or leaders of the Revolt sought to impress upon the people that Protestantism had been assailed and might in America be overthrown." One would have expected that George III constituted the lesser threat to Catholics, if only because he was across the sea, whereas the rabid dissenters were next door. Among the Germans in Pennsylvania, where Catholics were free to practice their Faith, almost all remained loyal to the Crown.

Writers of the period like de Tocqueville attest that Catholicism was then universally recognized as "the natural enemy of democracy." He is at some pains to explain how Catholics in the Colonies "faithful to the observances of their religion. . . fervent and zealous in the belief of their doctrines," nevertheless came to "constitute the most republican and most democratic class in the United States." He produces some tortuous reasoning, but the only real explanation is the Carrolls.

Descendants of the Charles Carroll who had settled in the Catholic colony of Maryland in 1688 and who was Lord Baltimore's friend and attorney general, they had been steeped in the spirit of the directives originally laid down by the first Proprietor in 1633: "that they suffer no scandal nor offence to be given to any of the Protestants, whereby any just complaint may hereafter be made by them in Virginia or in England, and that for that end, they cause all acts of the Roman Catholique Religion to be done as privately as may be, and that they instruct all the Roman Catholiques to be silent upon all occasions of discourse concerning matters of Religion. . ." From this atmosphere of compromise the Carrolls carried the seeds of the Americanism later condemned by Leo XIII, to germination in the American Revolution.

By that time Baltimore's ecumenical colony had long since fallen to its Protestant components, who not only proscribed the Faith, but even disbarred Catholic lawyers like Charles and Daniel from practice. Still convinced that "toleration" was the answer, however, John Carroll would declare publicly as Prefect Apostolic of the American missions that "America may come to exhibit a proof to the world that general and equal toleration, by giving a free circulation to fair argument, is the most effectual method to bring all denominations of Christians to a unity of faith."

This fond illusion had apparently been fed at the celebrated St. Omer's, the English college in French Flanders where the three Carrolls had all been sent to study in their youth, and where John later taught as a Jesuit. Founded by the Society of Jesus in 1592 for the education of English laymen denied Catholic education in England, this school might be expected to have been especially orthodox. Such was hardly the case by the 18th century, for it seems to have fallen under the direction of Jesuits like the equivocal Thomas Copley whose democratizing influence had become so powerful in the early days of the already liberal Maryland colony

Thomas Lloyd, a Catholic Revolutionary War veteran who was in 1789 the official reporter of the House of Representatives, had studied seven years at St. Omer. He stated in his later years that he had there "been trained not only in religious and secular knowledge, but in republican principles." These words take on added weight when we learn that two of his professors, John Carroll and Leonard Neale, became Archbishops of Baltimore, and that it was on the advice of the latter that Lloyd settled in the colonies in the first place, in St. Mary's County, Maryland.

+

Like most of the revolutionaries, the Carrolls were therefore not so much American as English products. They brought here in Catholic dress the same democratic ideas imported by the handful of English Masons who hatched the rebellion against the English monarchy in the Green Dragon Tavern in Boston.

Called by Daniel Webster the "Headquarters of the Revolution," this English pub with its occult, diabolic sign -- Anglo-Saxon counterpart of the Feathered Serpent confronting the Faith on the other side of the continent in Spanish Mexico -- was the seat of the Massachusetts Provincial Grand Lodge, organized there back in 1719, known as the Lodge of St. Andrew. It was from the Green Dragon that the Freemasons Paul Revere, Samuel Adams, John Hancock and other "Sons of Liberty" unleashed their long planned rebellion on the unsuspecting loyal majority in the colonies.

According to Masonic tradition it was also from there that a group of patriots disguised as Mohawk Indians issued on Dec. 16, 1773 to board the English ships in Boston harbor and destroy 342 chests of tea valued at $90,000. The Masonic Association Publication entitled One if by Land and Two if by Sea states: "Freemasons of the Colony undoubtedly had a large part in

the destruction of the tea cargoes. The records of St. Andrew's Lodge, of which Paul Revere was a member, show that on the night of Nov. 30, 1773"-- Feast of St. Andrew -- "the night of the annual election of officers -- only seven members were present. No election was held, and the presence of only seven members given as the reason according to the entries in the lodge minutes." The missing members had been busy since the 28th calling mass meetings and placing guards dockside to prevent unloading the tea. "Another meeting was called on the 30th, at which officers of two additional ships which had arrived in the meantime were made to promise that they would leave the harbor without unloading their tea cargoes."

Not generally disclosed is that one of the faults most held against the good king "Farmer George" was his uncompromising intolerance of Masonry in England. Balked in its conspiracy at home, Masonry brought it to the colonies, with the success we all know. The Masonic role in the Revolution is a secret now officially revealed: The beautiful full color Bicentennial booklet We, the People, offered to the public by the U.S. Capitol Historical Society in cooperation with the National Geographic Society in 1974, features photographs of building stones chiseled with Masonic symbols found under the Old House wing. Referring to the dedication of the Captiol, the text reads, "The day's program involved elaborate Masonic ceremonies, a common practice then, with roots going back to the link between medieval stone masons and the order," followed by a brief description of the service.

That the Carrolls collaborated with the Masonic framers of the Constitution is not hard to prove. To John Carroll is attributed, at least in part, Article Six, Section 3, which declares that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States," and also the First Amendment stating, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

When King George granted newly conquered French Canada free practice of its faith by the Quebec Act, the revolutionary propagandists didn't neglect exploiting this to the full, accusing him of being "a Roman Catholic tyrant" who had broken his Coronation Oath by establishing the "popish religion" in an English colony, and darkly predicting that this would soon become the rule in all the others. They hoped thus to rally all anti-Catholic sentiment, whether dissenters or adherents of the Church of England, to the revolutionary cause.

The Carrolls, astute politicians all three, were not dismayed by this ploy. They knew the Masons had no intention of stopping with a mere Declaration of Independence which would leave thirteen sovereign states with all their rights, but would proceed to unification under a Constitution where these would be severely limited. In a land where sects of all kinds abounded, it was a foregone conclusion that complete toleration and plurality would have to be enjoined by law. Aware of the advantages to Catholics under such a system -- actually the same envisioned by Lord Baltimore a century before in one colony -- they not only threw themselves publicly behind the Revolution, but drew thousands of Catholics after them.

+

Charles Carroll, born in Annapolis in 1737, had become very active politically on completing his education abroad, serving 23 years in the Maryland legislature and also in the U.S. Senate until it became illegal to hold both offices simultaneously. At the time of the Revolution he was probably the richest man in America, owning some 80,000 acres in Maryland alone. Enjoying a reputation of a somewhat eccentric, but affable money-grubber, he was invaluable in managing the finances of the Continental Army. It has been pointed out that he stood most to lose should the Revolution fail: "There go a few millions!" was exclaimed by an onlooker as he signed the Declaration of Independence. But this was to lose sight of the fact that he also stood most to gain if the Revolution succeeded and English taxes thereby abolished. His gamble paid off gloriously.

He was the only Catholic to sign the Declaration, whose language a true son of the Church would have held under the deepest suspicion. Although he never denied the Faith and was sober and disciplined in his personal habits, he was not noted for any outbursts of piety. His birth may have been illegitimate, inasmuch as his parents' marriage document bears a date some twenty years after he was born. His wife died young, a victim of opiates, and he never re-married. All his children died out of the Church, his only son Charles of Homewood renouncing the Faith, taking to drink and never holding any position worth mentioning.

The Masonic builders of liberty had the utmost confidence in Charles Carroll. He not only helped win Maryland to the Articles of Confederation and later to the hotly resisted Constitution, but through his connections abroad smoothed Franklin's path in Paris, to seal the French Alliance whereby France threw her weight against the English king. In February 1776 the Con-

tinental Congress resolved "that a committee of three -- two of whom to be members of Congress -- be appointed to repair to Canada, there to pursue such instructions as shall be given them by that body." Those named were the dean of American Masonry, Benjamin Franklin, together with the Maryland Protestant Samuel Chase -- and Charles Carroll. This despite the fact that he was only an observer at the Congress, Catholics being barred from serving as delegates.

More interesting was a special resolution requesting Charles Carroll "to prevail on Mr. John Carroll to accompany the Committee to Canada to assist them in such matters as they shall think useful." This idea seems to have originated in a letter written to Hancock by Charles Lee, who said, "I should think that if some Jesuit or religious of any other order (but he must be a man of liberal sentiments, large in mind and a manifest friend of civil liberty) could be found out and sent to Canada he would be worth battalions to us. This thought struck me some time ago and I am pleased to find from the conversation with Mr. Price and his fellow travelers that the thought was far from a wild one. Mr. Carroll has a relative who exactly follows the description." And both Carrolls spoke French fluently.

William Harper Bennett, in Catholic Footsteps in Old New York, says, "John Carroll, a Marylander by birth and a Jesuit by vocation, was an American patriot in every fiber of his body, and his cousin Charles Carroll had no difficulty in prevailing on him to respond to the call of his country. 'No greater power of combined wealth, intellect and enthusiasm existed anywhere in America,' says a writer, 'than the union of the Carrolls and the Jesuits in Maryland in the person of John Carroll.'"

Echoing this opinion, Fr. Greeley says of the latter: "His years in the Jesuits and traveling through the European countries might have been presumed to dispose him toward assuming if not a conservative at least a Royalist position. But apparently it did not take him long after he returned to Maryland to size up the politics of the conflict between England and the colonies, and to make up his mind on which side he belonged. In fact, one of the reasons for settling at his mother's home in Rock Creek (near the future capital -Ed.) rather than at an established parish was that Carroll was extremely reluctant to accept the authority of Father John Lewis, superior of the Maryland mission, and the Vicar-General of the Bishop of London. Carroll was of no mind to associate himself publicly with ecclesiastical authority that resided in England. Thus when the peculiar request came from the Continental Congress for him to go on the ill-conceived mission to Quebec, there was no doubt in anyone's mind that Carroll was a man that could be trusted."

The object of the mission was simple: to win Catholic Canada to the Revolution as "the 14th state." Although vested with almost absolute powers, even military, the committee failed miserably, due largely to the alertness and open hostility of the French Bishop of Quebec, Jean Olivier Briand, who "by exhortation, admonitions, public penances, excommunications and suspensions," writes Bennett, "drew his clergy back from rebellion and held them loyal to Great Britain." He forbade his priests to hold any communication with Fr. Carroll. Fr. Pierre René Floquet, the only Jesuit in Montreal, was suspended for extending him hospitality. "There were 150,000 Catholics and 360 Protestants in the province of Quebec, the Church had spoken in no uncertain terms, and her children had yielded obedience."

The good Bishop certainly could have had little love for his new British overlords, but he saw revolution -- even now brewing ominously in France -- as far the greater evil. Nor did he have any illusions about what the Founding Fathers down south really thought of the Faith. In his diary Charles Pinckney would quote Franklin, head of the mission as saying later, "I fully agree with General Washington that we must safeguard this young nation," and the reference included the "menace" of Roman Catholicism. John Adams, who sometimes attended services at "Romish chapels" to while away his Sunday boredom, described his impressions in a letter to his wife Abigail in 1774. He speaks of "the poor wretches fingering their beads, chanting Latin, not a word of which they understood; their pater nosters and ave Marias; their holy water; their crossing themselves perpetually; their bowing to the name of Jesus, whenever they hear it; their bowings, kneelings and genuflections before the altar, etc." And he concludes, "I wonder how Luther ever broke the spell. Adieu."

+

De Courcy and Shea remark in their History of the Catholic Church in America, "In the extraordinary history of the Society of Jesus, the case of this Jesuit (John Carroll), ambassador from a Congress of Republican Protestants, is not the least remarkable episode; and while the democrats of every clime reproach the children of St. Ignatius with being the tools of despotic power, they can offer Father John Carroll as a sincere patriot, a zealous partisan of liberty and one of the real founders of American independence." Thus two different currents

were already at work in the Society as in the Church.

On the Canada mission was cemented a firm friendship between Fr. Carroll and the aging Franklin which later bore abundant fruit. On the trip Franklin wrote, "I find I grow daily more feeble, and I think I could hardly have got so far but for Mr. Carroll's friendly assistance and care of me." Years later he confides to his Diary for July 1, 1784, "The Pope's Nuncio called and acquainted me that the Pope had, on my recommendation, appointed Mr. John Carroll superior of the Catholic clergy in America, with many powers of bishop; and that, probably, he would be made bishop in partibus before the end of the year."

In the official letter to Carroll, Cardinal Antonelli confirms that he was chosen because "it is known that your appointment will please and gratify many members of that republic, and especially Mr. Franklin, the eminent individual who represents that republic at the court of the Most Christian King." Accepting the appointment, Carroll urged the Cardinal to find some method whereby in future it would not appear that the American Church was receiving its authority from a foreign power! He had petitioned the Pope not to leave American Catholics under the jurisdiction of their prelate in England, alleging this could not be done "without open offense of this supreme magistracy and political government."

Franklin had at first favored putting the Catholics under a French prelate in Europe. After the French Alliance brought Catholic France to the aid of the American Revolution and King Louis XVI ordered a Te Deum sung in thanksgiving for the victory at Yorktown, Franklin knew what occult forces had gained control of the tottering French monarchy, itself now on the eve of the French Revolution. But John Carroll was even better. As a member of the Carroll clan, an American prelate was a positive asset to be cultivated.

The revolutionaries played a good game with the Catholics. It's of record that members of the Continental Congress actually attended Mass officially on four occasions -- one offered in celebration of the Fourth of July in 1779, another for the Yorktown thanksgiving in 1781, and two Requiems, one for General de Coudray in 1777 and for the private Spanish agent Don Juan de Miralles in 1780. The Congress even bore the expense of Coudray's funeral. Needless to say, these items were not reported in the patriot press, which continued the anti-popery propaganda.

Soon John Carroll began pressuring Rome for an American bishop selected, if not actually appointed, by democratic process. "As for the method of nominating a bishop," he wrote the Cardinal, "I will say no more for the present than this -- that we are imploring God in His wisdom and mercy to guide the judgment of the Holy See, that if He does not deem it proper to allow the priests who have labored for so many years in this vineyard of the Lord to propose to the Holy See the one they deem most fit, that some method will be adopted by which bad feeling may not be excited among the people of this country, Catholics and Protestants."

Be it noted that Carroll's nomination by his establishment was a foregone conclusion involving no risk on his part, for the only other possible candidate, John Lewis, was then too old for so strenuous an office. Rome took five years to accede to Carroll's wishes, and eventually revoked the unprecedented privilege, but by that time the democratic virus had been established, and it continued spreading silently until full eruption with Vatican II.

In 1785 Carroll wrote, "We desire that the Faith in its integrity, due obedience to the Apostolic See and perfect union should flourish; and at the same time that whatever can with safety to religion be granted shall be conceded to American Catholics in ecclesiastical affairs. In this way, we hope the distrust of Protestants now full of suspicion will be diminished and that our affairs can be solidly established." Alas, the "distrust of Protestants" has today diminished to the vanishing point in the face of Catholic compromising. John Carroll himself now occupies a prominent place in the stained glass window of a "Maryland Bay" in the ecumenical Protestant Washington National Cathedral in the nation's capital.

When George Washington died, Shea tells us, Bishop Carroll "issued a circular to his clergy in regard to the celebration of the 22nd of February as a day of mourning, giving directions for such action as would be in conformity with the spirit of the Church, while attesting to the country the sorrow and regret experienced by Catholics at the great national loss." Carroll may therefre perhaps be credited with actually initiating the new sanctoral cycle of secular "saints" whose feast days now occur regularly in the national liturgy. Invited by a unanimous resolution of Congress in conjunction with the clergy of all denominations, he preached the first President's panegyric in Baltimore Cathedral -- a truly ecumenical triumph for a Catholic in those days.

Libraries are searched in vain for spiritual books written by our first Catholic Bishop, his famous "Prayer for Civil Authorities" apparently marking the summit of his spiritual develop-

ment. He was the prototype of the Bishop-Administrator who came to dominate the American scene, who habitually left purely spiritual matters to technicians with less weighty civic responsibilities. His last public act was declining, because of ill health, the honor of laying the cornerstone of the Washington Monument in 1815, dying that December.

+

In his Catholic empire-building Bishop Carroll had had not only the decisive help of his cousin Charles, but also that of his older brother Daniel, third member of the triumvirate, and a shining example of what heights a Catholic who knew how to cooperate could scale in the new order of 1776:

On Thursday, March 1, 1781, "According to the order of the day, the hon'ble John Hanson and Daniel Carroll. . . did, in behalf of the State of Maryland, sign and ratify the said Articles, by which act the Confederation of the United States of America was completed, each and every of the Thirteen United States. . . having adopted and confirmed, and by their delegates in Congress ratified the same." This was no mean achievement, largely engineered by the said Daniel, considering that in 1775 the Maryland Convention had formally instructed its delegates to the Continental Congress "to disavow in the most solemn manner, all design in the colonies for independence."

These Articles were the law of the land until the Federal Constitution was railroaded through in 1787. Daniel Carroll signed this too, having been one of the Catholic members of the Convention which framed it, the other being Thomas Fitz-Simons of Pennsylvania. Together with his cousin Charles he had, here too, been instrumental in bringing Maryland around, in opposition to the anti-Federalist faction of Samuel Chase, who had been one of the Canada mission. In a public letter to his balky constituents, who saw very well that with the adoption of the Constitution, "all the offices of government. . . which are transferred from the individual to the aggregate sovereignty of the States, will necessarily turn the stream of influence and emolument into a new channel," he categorically declared, "I am bold to assert that it is the best form of government which has ever been offered to the world!" -- an astounding statement for an educated man to make, let alone a Catholic.

Taking it upon themselves to speak for all the Catholics of the U.S., the three Carrolls together with Fitz-Simons and the New Yorker Dominic Lynch, were soon gratified to present a letter of congratulation to George Washington on his election as first President of the newly unified state. In his reply Washington politely lays down the law to Catholics, who must continue to cooperate with the ideals of the Green Dragon, being now firmly committed to them:

"As mankind become more liberal, they will be more apt to allow, that all those who conduct themselves as worthy members of the community are equally entitled to the protection of the civil government. I hope ever to see America among the foremost examples of justice and liberality. And I presume that your fellow-citizens will not forget the patriotic part which you took in the accomplishment of their Revolution, and the establishment of their government; or the important assistance which they received from a nation in which the Catholic religion is professed," -- alas, poor France. These words of Washington are of a piece with those in his Farewell Address where he warns against "the insidious wiles of foreign influence," which some students of the period feel more than included the Vatican.

END OF PART I

This article and Part II available from BIG ROCK PAPERS, R2 Box 158, Leesburg, Va. 22075 - 50¢ ea.

For the "other side" of history, read also:

THE STRANGE SPIRIT OF '76 (Parts I and II) $1.00
THE SECRET OF LA SALETTE, the inside story with authentic text 50¢; Text alone 25¢, 5 for $1.00
SAINT CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS? 50¢
LORD BALTIMORE'S BUNGLE 50¢
MASS IN THE LATTER DAYS 50¢
LUCIFER'S PRIMACY 50¢
AIMEZ-VOUS CATHERINE EMMERICH? 50¢
THE GLOBAL TEMPTATION 50¢
THE LITURGICAL REVOLUTION 50¢
THE HOLY ROSARY 50¢

WRITE FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS

Daniel Carroll

THE TRIUMPH OF THE GREEN DRAGON

The U.S. Catholic Church of America: Part Two

by Solange Hertz

Catholics would be tolerated in the new republic as long as they proved useful and subservient. Daniel Carroll's co-operation, it seems, went even deeper than the other two Carrolls: According to the records of Masonic Lodge No. 16 of Baltimore, he received the degree of Entered Apprentice in May, 1780, was admitted the following July, and in May, 1781 became a Master Mason. As member of the Craft and one of three Commissioners chosen to lay out a site for the artificial state's new capital, he played a star role in the Masonic ceremonies which laid the cornerstone of the District of Columbia near Jones' Point in 1791, and later that of the U.S. Capitol in 1793. Curiously enough, this last now stands on land owned by Daniel Carroll, which he transferred to the new government. (In 1663 it had belonged to a man named Pope, who called his estate "Rome.")

In an account of the cornerstone laying, "We, the People" imparts, "As President, war hero, and Acting Grand Master of Maryland's Grand Lodge, Washington had the lead role, supported by a uniformed and decorated cast from the Alexandria Volunteer Artillery and Masonic lodges of Maryland, Virginia and the District. A parade began with the President's arrival on the Virginia shore of the 'Grand River of the Patowmack,' crossed to the Maryland side, and moved on to the President's Square, collecting additions at each meeting place. 'The procession marched two abreast,' an observer reported in the September 25 issue of the Alexandria Gazette, 'in the greatest solemn dignity, with music playing, drums beating, colours flying and spectators rejoicing.' Skirting 'the great Serbonian bog' that was then Pennsylvania Avenue, the marchers followed a new post road, broke ranks to step from stone to stone to teeter over a single log across Tiber Creek at the foot of Capitol Hill, and proceeded to the hilltop building site. There, Washington, wearing a Masonic apron reported to be 'the handiwork of Mrs. General Lafayette,' conducted the ceremony with a marble headed gavel and a silver trowel."

In Washington and His Masonic Compeers, written by Sidney Hayden in 1866, further details can be found concerning the long ritual, which was punctuated by 15 volleys of artillery and crowned by a feast of barbecued ox. The inscription on the stone read, "This southeast cornerstone of the Capitol of the United States of America, in the City of Washington, was laid on the 18th day of September, 1793, in the thirteenth year of American independence, in the first year of the second term of the presidency of George Washington. . . in the year of Masonry, 5793, by the President of the United States, in concert with the Grand Lodge of Maryland, several lodges under its jurisdiction, and Lodge 22 from Alexandria, Virginia." On the cornerstone was set a plate "on which was deposed Corn, Wine, and Oil, when the whole congregation joined in reverential prayer, which was succeeded by Masonic chanting honors. . ."

Joseph Clarke of the Maryland Lodge delivered an oration in which, imploring the blessing of "the Great Architect," he expressed the "hope that this work may be remembered for many ages to come, as a similar work has from the commencement of time to this remarkable moment; I mean, the work of laying the corner-stone of our ancient, honorable and sublime order. . . Brethren, although I have neither wishes nor pretensions to divinations, yet I venture to prophesy. . . that all I have suggested to you will soon come to pass; when we shall all hail, Blessed Territory Columbia, - favored land, soon, very soon, indeed, shall the shores of thy peaceful and delightful city be visited by the commercial interests of the united world. . ." And he concludes with the Masonic Amen, "So mote it be."

Historians admit that George Washington was not the most fervent of Masons, but it is hard to deny his affiliation in the face of the evidence. There have been attempts, one of the most telling being that of Governor Joseph Ritner of Pennsylvania in a communication to the House of Representatives in 1837, but this was delivered at the height of the anti-Masonic

movement, and had regrettable political overtones. Stories of Washington's secret conversion to Catholicism also continue to circulate, with details of how Fr. Leonard Neale, S.J., future Archbishop of Baltimore, swam the Potomac to Mt. Vernon with the Sacraments literally in his teeth. The truth is that in the funeral oration Bishop Carroll delivered for Washington he states clearly that he was not of the Faith. And who could have known better than he?

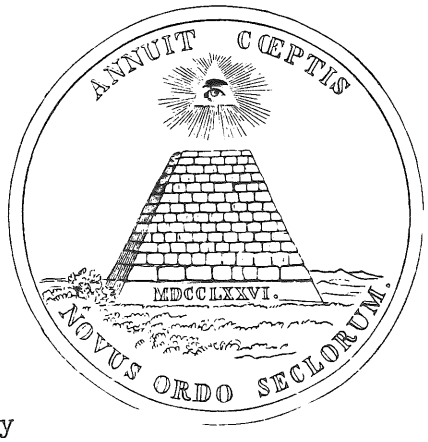
Of like substance is the tale of Washington's "vision" at Valley Forge, where he was presumably visited by a mysterious lady who prophesied America's future to him in three extraordinary tableaux. Some will even imply this lady was the Mother of God, despite the fact that both her message and her appearance have a decidedly Masonic flavor. The fact remains that Washington was, by his own consent, inaugurated into the Presidency by the Grand Master of New York, and took the oath of office on a Bible belonging to St. John's Lodge No. 1 -- a Bible later used, incidentally, for Warren Harding in 1921 and Dwight Eisenhower in 1953, also Masons.

It's hard to see how Daniel Carroll, a Catholic, could have actually taken part in Masonic ritual. Even as an Apprentice, he would in veiled symbols have renounced all supernatural faith. Masons themselves are at a loss to explain him. Brother Ronald Heaton, in a Masonic Service publication dated 1961, "Masonic Membership of the Signers of the Articles of Confederation," is constrained to quote a Catholic apologist who offers lamely, "Carroll's membership as a Catholic in the Society was not unusual in that period, due no doubt . . . to the lack of knowledge concerning the Society." Such an explanation is hard to accept, for Daniel Carroll was no ignorant backwoodsman, but like his two relatives, a polished gentleman educated both here and abroad far beyond the average Protestant he consorted with.

It is inconceivable that he was unaware of Clement XII's Constitution In Eminenti, delivered back in 1731, which states that for the faithful to belong to secret societies "is, before the eyes of sensible and honorable persons, to stain themselves with the sign of complete perversion." Perhaps the sign of the Green Dragon? Could he never have heard of the Constitution Providas of Benedict XIV? It renewed the warning in 1751 that "what takes place in those Masonic meetings is against the established order, be it religious or political!" His ignorance is unlikely, especially with a Jesuit younger brother who once taught moral theology in a European college and who was even now administering the whole Church in the U.S.

In the American Bishops' Pastoral of 1810, even this brother was forced to "enjoin on all priests exercising. . . faculties for the administration of the Sacraments, not to admit to those of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist such persons as are known to belong to the association, commonly called of Freemasons, unless these persons seriously promise to abstain forever after from going to their lodges, and professing themselves to belong to their society: and Pastors of Congregations shall frequently recommend to all under their care never to join with or become members of the said Fraternity." From these words it is evident that the evil must have been so rampant in the new republic that it had come to the attention of Rome.

Cardinal Rodriguez of Chile, in The Mystery of Freemasonry Unveiled, writes, "The hatred of North American Masonry against religious teachings, especially Catholic teaching, is the same as that of all the lodges of the world. Because of it they have dictated the law of only public and compulsory teaching; and of course it is atheistic in several states. . . . However, this does not mean that the campaign does not go on, to prepare the land, to transform the Constitution and reach what in that country is called liberty. We already know too, that according to the explanation given by the most noted Masons in the United States, the god of Masonry is not the God worshipped by the Christians, or the Mohammedans, or the Jews; it is a pagan god; any god, Nature, sun, flesh, etc., anything except the real God, the Personal God, different from the world, and the Creator of Christianity.



"It is true that the Grand Lodge Masons of New York have declared that they do not want affiliations with lodges which do not acknowledge God or the Bible, but that does not mean an absolute breach at all." And he quotes William A. Rowan who in "The Builder" wrote, "There is only one God, Father of the human race; there is the rock over which we build; the Holy Bible is the Great Cross in Masonry. . . . On these principles, I dare say, our Great Jurisdiction will be in union with all the Great Jurisdictions of the Universe, with a view to better reciprocal understanding, closer relations, and a common action to realize the Masonic unity and make the spirit of brotherhood progress." All types of Masonry

movement, and had regrettable political overtones. Stories of Washington's secret conversion to Catholicism also continue to circulate, with details of how Fr. Leonard Neale, S.J., future Archbishop of Baltimore, swam the Potomac to Mt. Vernon with the Sacraments literally in his teeth. The truth is that in the funeral oration Bishop Carroll delivered for Washington he states clearly that he was not of the Faith. And who could have known better than he?

Of like substance is the tale of Washington's "vision" at Valley Forge, where he was presumably visited by a mysterious lady who prophesied America's future to him in three extraordinary tableaux. Some will even imply this lady was the Mother of God, despite the fact that both her message and her appearance have a decidedly Masonic flavor. The fact remains that Washington was, by his own consent, inaugurated into the Presidency by the Grand Master of New York, and took the oath of office on a Bible belonging to St. John's Lodge No. 1 -- a Bible later used, incidentally, for Warren Harding in 1921 and Dwight Eisenhower in 1953, also Masons.

It's hard to see how Daniel Carroll, a Catholic, could have actually taken part in Masonic ritual. Even as an Apprentice, he would in veiled symbols have renounced all supernatural faith. Masons themselves are at a loss to explain him. Brother Ronald Heaton, in a Masonic Service publication dated 1961, "Masonic Membership of the Signers of the Articles of Confederation," is constrained to quote a Catholic apologist who offers lamely, "Carroll's membership as a Catholic in the Society was not unusual in that period, due no doubt . . . to the lack of knowledge concerning the Society." Such an explanation is hard to accept, for Daniel Carroll was no ignorant backwoodsman, but like his two relatives, a polished gentleman educated both here and abroad far beyond the average Protestant he consorted with.

It is inconceivable that he was unaware of Clement XII's Constitution In Eminenti, delivered back in 1731, which states that for the faithful to belong to secret societies "is, before the eyes of sensible and honorable persons, to stain themselves with the sign of complete perversion." Perhaps the sign of the Green Dragon? Could he never have heard of the Constitution Providas of Benedict XIV? It renewed the warning in 1751 that "what takes place in those Masonic meetings is against the established order, be it religious or political!" His ignorance is unlikely, especially with a Jesuit younger brother who once taught moral theology in a European college and who was even now administering the whole Church in the U.S.

In the American Bishops' Pastoral of 1810, even this brother was forced to "enjoin on all priests exercising. . . faculties for the administration of the Sacraments, not to admit to those of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist such persons as are known to belong to the association, commonly called of Freemasons, unless these persons seriously promise to abstain forever after from going to their lodges, and professing themselves to belong to their society: and Pastors of Congregations shall frequently recommend to all under their care never to join with or become members of the said Fraternity." From these words it is evident that the evil must have been so rampant in the new republic that it had come to the attention of Rome.

Cardinal Rodriguez of Chile, in The Mystery of Freemasonry Unveiled, writes, "The hatred of North American Masonry against religious teachings, especially Catholic teaching, is the same as that of all the lodges of the world. Because of it they have dictated the law of only public and compulsory teaching; and of course it is atheistic in several states. . . . However, this does not mean that the campaign does not go on, to prepare the land, to transform the Constitution and reach what in that country is called liberty. We already know too, that according to the explanation given by the most noted Masons in the United States, the god of Masonry is not the God worshipped by the Christians, or the Mohammedans, or the Jews; it is a pagan god; any god, Nature, sun, flesh, etc., anything except the real God, the Personal God, different from the world, and the Creator of Christianity.

"It is true that the Grand Lodge Masons of New York have declared that they do not want affiliations with lodges which do not acknowledge God or the Bible, but that does not mean an absolute breach at all." And he quotes William A. Rowan who in "The Builder" wrote, "There is only one God, Father of the human race; there is the rock over which we build; the Holy Bible is the Great Cross in Masonry. . . . On these principles, I dare say, our Great Jurisdiction will be in union with all the Great Jurisdictions of the Universe, with a view to better reciprocal understanding, closer relations, and a common action to realize the Masonic unity and make the spirit of brotherhood progress." All types of Masonry

says the Cardinal, "are serving as a base. . . to that mysterious pyramid, in which at the top, Satan is worshipped and Jesus Christ and God are renounced, and where there is taught as an ideal, universal rebellion and absolute licentiousness."

Can Daniel Carroll have been blind to all this?

+

John Carroll, later Archbishop of Baltimore, painted by Charles Willson Peale, c.1775.

With the help of his two relatives, John Carroll accomplished an extraordinary tour de force. Uniting all Catholic nationalities in the U.S. firmly under his sole politically sanctioned jurisdiction with the approval of Rome, he led them to peaceful, respectable co-operation with all the other elements rounded up under the sign of the Green Dragon. It had been necessary, of course, to convince large numbers of Catholics that the irreconcilable conflict between their religion and the principles of the Revolution was only apparent and need only be correctly understood to disappear completely.

That he succeeded is a tribute to his genius, for along with Masonry, modern secular democracy had already in his day been condemned by two Popes. Pius VI, who had made him Bishop, had excoriated separation of Church and state and sovereignty of the people in Caritas Quae, speaking of "the fury of the Tiers Etat" who fabricated "that baleful constitution separated and cut off from the Catholic religion." And long before him, the Angelic Doctor himself had denied that all men are created equal, laying down that the very notion of order "chiefly consists in inequality" (ST I, Q96,a3).

Soon Gregory XVI, in Mirari Vos and Singulari Nos, would speak out against the "insanity" of believing "that the liberty of conscience and of worship is the inalienable right of every citizen. . . that the citizens have the right to manifest openly and publicly their ideas by word of mouth, through the press, or by any other means." And again, "The barrier must be erected against the wild license of opinions and speech. . . the condemnation of an absolute liberty of conscience."

Today we have the benefit of the fulminations of at least five more Popes, even the liberal Leo XIII, and especially St. Pius X, who in his admirable letter on the Sillon movement laid down, "Those who preside over the government of public affairs may indeed, in certain cases, be chosen by the will and judgment of the multitude without repugnance or opposition to Catholic doctrine. But while this choice marks out the ruler, it does not confer upon him the authority to govern; it does not delegate the power, it designates the person who will be invested with it. Moreover, if the people retains the power, what becomes of authority? A shadow, a myth; there is no more law properly so called, no more obedience." Power does not come from below, as the Dragon would have it.

"There is an error and a danger," St. Pius warns, "in binding down Catholicism, by principle, to any particular form of government. Such error and danger are all the greater when one associates religion with a kind of democracy the doctrines of which are erroneous." This kind of democracy he defines as one "which goes to such lengths in its wickedness as to give sovereignty to the people, and which presses for the suppression of classes and for their levelling down." He calls "liberty, equality and fraternity" a "theory opposed to Catholic truth, warping the essential and fundamental notions which regulate social relations in every human society. . . By separating fraternity from Christian charity thus understood, democracy, far from being progress, means a disastrous set-back for civilization."

As for constructing artificial nations, he says, "No, civilization does not have to be invented, nor the New City built in the clouds. It has been already; it is here. It is Christian civilization, the Catholic City. The only problem is to keep setting it up and restoring it on its natural and divine foundations against the ever-recurring attacks of the unhealthy utopia of revolt and impiety." He begs, "Let not the Priesthood be misled by the miracles of a false democracy into the maze of ideas; let them not borrow from the rhetoric of the worst enemies of the Church the high-flown phrases full of promises which are as high-sounding as they are unrealizable!"

Pius XI echoed the same sentiments, in Divini Redemptoris declaring, "It is utterly untrue and mere empty talk, to say that all citizens have equal rights!" We tend to forget that modern democracy never entered the world by way of the Church, but by means of men who had long ago forsworn the true faith. Even Nietzsche saw democracy would eventually "nurture a human type

prepared for slavery in the most subtle sense of the term."

Papal quotations on the subject are legion. Nearer our own day, Pius XII in a radio message on Christmas Eve, 1944 said, "The State does not contain in itself and does not mechanically gather within a given territory an amorphous agglomeration of individuals. The State is, and must be in reality, the organic and organizing unity of a true people. . . Equality degenerates into a mechanical levelling, into a drab uniformity; the sentiment of true honor, personal commitment, respect for tradition, dignity -- in a word, all that gives life its true value -- little by little sinks and disappears."

+

What, exactly, is an "American?" What is an "American Catholic?" Wave after wave of foreign Catholic immigrants arrived in the U.S. to be recycled and absorbed into the establishment prepared for them by the Carrolls and their Green Dragon friends. "The Catholic Church of the Carrolls," writes Fr. Greeley, "was a native American church presided over by leaders lay and clerical who yielded to no one in being respectable members of the American establishment." There were many anguished protests to Rome, as in the Baltimore and Philadelphia "schisms," but Rome seems to have been powerless against the fait accompli, reduced to making the best of a bad situation.

During the great influx of immigrants from Germany and Italy, not to mention Ireland, in the 19th century, the problem reached crisis proportions. In 1895 a French visitor, Marc Leclerc, wrote Choses d'Amerique, in which he quotes John Carroll as saying, "It was never in our doctrine that salvation could be obtained only by those who are in actual communion with the Church." Apropos of this he goes on to write, "It is he who expressed the desire that the liturgy be allowed to employ English for the greatest good of the poor people and the illiterate negroes. Cardinal Gibbons, the present head of the American Church (sic!), has faithfully continued to teach the same doctrines. He never speaks of the Protestant sects as irreconcilable enemies; he calls them rather 'our separated brethren,' 'our dissident brothers.'" He condemns in a dogmatic book, The Faith of Our Fathers, the Inquisition and persecutions.

Leclerc goes on to note approvingly, "In this land of liberty the Catholic Church has realized that she should preach and practice tolerance; likewise, she has made a point of proving that she is not an aristocratic organization, that she is, on the contrary, sincerely devoted to democracy. . . She wishes to be called American; she has entered into the spirit of the nation; but she has sensed, indeed that she has very much to do, more so every day, to transform and assimilate the heterogenous elements who come to her without ceasing from Europe" -- but who, we might add, all possessed the unity of faith when they arrived.

This writer was not blind to the probable consequences: "The American civilization is profoundly materialistic. When the new settlers, when the sons of the docile recruits of the Catholic Church have been imbued with the American spirit, will there remain a place in their hearts for the precepts of Rome and of the Faith?

"Already the strong and solemn voice of the Anglo-Saxons has made itself heard and harkened to in the councils of the Church; it is that voice which thrusts upon Rome, by threatening an appeal to the people, the solicitude about social problems, and an inexorably democratic policy. . . The American Church, after having been a simple external appendage of the Church of Rome . . . has become one of the inmost motive forces. . . . The ten million (in 1895) American Catholics have, on several memorable occasions, weighed heavier in the scales of the Holy See than the hundreds of millions of faithful in old Europe." Has the American Church actually been the Green Dragon's instrument to infiltrate the Church in Rome and destroy the remains of political Christendom? Let history judge.

In 1884 the Americanist Bishop of Baltimore, John Ireland, had proclaimed, "I would not utter one syllable that would belie, however remotely, either the Church or the Republic, and when I assert, as I now solemnly do, that the principles of the Church are in thorough harmony with the interests of the Republic, I know in the depths of my soul that I speak the truth." In 1909 Cardinal Gibbons wrote in the North American Review that Catholics preferred their country's form of government "before any other. They admire its institutions and the spirit of its laws. They accept the Constitution without reserve, with no desire as Catholics to see it changed in any feature. They can with a clear conscience swear to uphold it."

These protestations were calculated to silence violently anti-Catholic organizations like the infamous Know-Nothings and the American Protective Association, which, enemies as they were, publicly pointed out the intrinsic variance between the Faith and the Masonic dogmas of the state. Before the Catholic John Kennedy captured the Presidency, he declared during his

campaign in Houston, "I believe in an America where the separation of Church and State is absolute. . . where there is no Catholic vote." In West Virginia he promised "he would not take orders from any Pope, Cardinal, Bishop or priest, nor would they try to give me orders. If any Pope attempted to influence me as president, I would have to tell him it was completely improper. If you took orders from the Pope, you would be breaking your oath of office and commit a sin against God."

+

In 1871 an international organization called the St. Raphaelsverein had been founded to help preserve the faith of uprooted emigrants. Protesting their treatment in America, it presented to the Pope in Dec., 1890 a document signed by representatives of seven countries which stated, "The losses which the Church has suffered in the United States of America number more than ten million souls." A report submitted to an international Congress in Liege the previous September by a French-Canadian priest of the Albany diocese, Alphonse Villeneuve, contended that out of 25 million immigrants to the U.S., 20 million had been lost to the Church. Exaggeration, perhaps, but so much smoke must mean quite a fire.

The St. Raphael report, published in full in the New York Herald, pled for separate parishes and schools for emigrant groups, administered by priests of their own nationality "wherever their numbers and means make such a practice possible." In a desperate attempt to stem the losses by freeing these flocks from the iron grip of the establishment Church, it was deemed advisable that they have their own episcopacy, so that "in the assemblies of bishops, every immigrant race would be represented, and its interests and needs would be protected." Also requested were special seminaries to train missionaries for emigrants, and the establishment of St. Raphael societies under a Cardinal Protector in Rome.

Needless to say, the Green Dragon would not brook any such returns to the natural order, even for purely spiritual ends, for he was not interested in saving souls, but only in forging docile Catholic "masses." As Pius XII observed in the aforementioned talk, "People and amorphous multitude or, as one says, the 'masses,' are two different concepts. A people lives by its own vitality; the mass is inert in itself, and can only be moved from without. A people lives by the fullness of the life of the men composing it, each of whom -- at his own post and in his own way -- is a person conscious of his own responsibilities and his own convictions. The mass, on the contrary, waits for an impulsion from without, is an easy toy in the hands of whoever would exploit its instincts or emotionality, ready to follow in turn, today this, tomorrow that flag. . . In the ambitious hands of one or several individuals, joined artificially by their selfish tendencies, the State can, with the support of the mass reduced to a mere machine, impose its arbitrary will on the better part of the true people."

Ignoring Rome, which they taxed with "Curial ignorance" of the true needs of America, the Americanists continued regardless with their procrustean program. In some cases they even indulged in a kind of ecclesiastical "bussing", deliberately shifting foreign pastors to congregations of a different nationality in order to hasten the progress of both in English. Of all the foreign Catholics, only three of the Eastern Rites -- Melkite, Ruthenian and Ukrainian -- ever succeeded, after much suffering and humiliation, in securing Bishops independent of the American hierarchy. The other easterners continue still under the jurisdiction of the local Roman Rite ordinary.

Myron Kuropas, in The Ukrainians in America, says "Today the Ukrainian Catholic Church enjoys the distinction of being the only wholly national Catholic Church in America sanctioned by the Holy See in Rome. What is even more significant, however, is the fact that, with the exception of a married clergy, the basic elements of Ukrainian Catholicism have been preserved."

Otherwise all "ethnicism" was officially frowned upon, for what flourished since 1776 was not the Catholic Church of the Apostles so much as the Americanist one of the Revolution. There was no place in the U.S. for a Church which unequivocally respects national cultures as God ordained them. David Boyce of the English Counter-Reformation League put it bluntly: "The America of 1776 started out on a foundation that was intrinsically inimical to the Catholic Church, so that it has never been part of Christendom."

+

Holy souls like St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Bl. John Neumann and St. Vincent Palotti threw themselves and their resources at the service of the immigrant "nationals," but the policy of the American Church only grew stronger, soon supported by an unequalled educational system.

The groundwork for this too had been laid by John Carroll, who in colonial days had already dreamed of a Catholic college in America on the lines of his old alma mater St. Omer in Belgium, and which had been planned a century before him by the Jesuit Thomas Copley of Maryland. This organ for the intellectual formation of American Catholics turned out to be Georgetown Academy on the Potomac, founded in 1789. That it bore no saint's name and its seal is an imitation of the Great Seal of the U.S. attests to its democratic inspiration. In 1796 George Washington addressed its students. The first three Archbishops of Baltimore were intimately connected with it, Carroll as founder, Leonard Neale as President, and Marechal as professor.

The education it dispensed was to be scientific and liberal in every way. The prospectus read: "Agreeably to the liberal Principal of our Constitution, the Seminary will be open to Students of every religious profession." The Founder soon found fault with his coadjutor, Bishop Neal's administration of discipline, for in 1802 he wrote, "Its president, my coadjutor, and his brother Francis. . . both of them as worthy men as live, deter parents from sending their sons thither by some rigorous regulations not calculated for the meridian of America. Their principles are too monastic. . . they deny that liberty which all here will lay claim to."

Desiring to keep Georgetown in step with the world, he deplored stringent discipline on the ground that "on being delivered from it, young men burst out of confinement into licentiousness, and give way to errors and vices, which with more acquaintance with the manners and language of the world, they would have avoided." Thus he subscribed fully to the strange modern idea that the best antidote against vice is immersion in the world! This sort of permissiveness gained momentum with Cardinal Gibbons, who protested the Holy See's condemnation of the works of the socialist Henry George with the following:

". . . In dealing with so practicable a people as the Americans, in whose genius bizarre and impracticable ideas quickly find their grave, it seems to me that prudence suggests that absurdities and fallacies be allowed to perish by themselves, and not run the risk of giving them an importance, a life and an artificial force by the intervention of the tribunals of the Church." There must be no condemnations.

Georgetown has formed and educated several generations of America's Catholic elite in this strange spirit, spawning numerous other colleges and universities in its image. In 1888 it was ably seconded by the Pontifical Catholic University of America, also established in the nation's capital, and whose ex officio Chancellor is the Archbishop of Baltimore. Its chief promoters were two Americanists: Fr. Isaac Hecker, founder of the Paulists, who is probably also the founder of Catholic pentecostalism by his doctrine of the Holy Ghost acting independently of the Sacraments and spiritual direction; and Bishop John Lancaster Spalding of Peoria, later forced by the Apostolic Delegate to resign his see in scandalous circumstances. The University's first rector, another Americanist Bishop, John Keane of Richmond, was summarily dismissed in 1896 as a liberal whose orthodoxy in religious matters was highly suspect.

Despite all, the "official" Catholic schools in America continued taking their cue and trained many of their teachers in such educational centers, with the result that even ethnic parochial schools began parotting the same political mythology as the government and the establishment pulpits. The emphasis was not so much on being a perfect Catholic as 100% American. The flag was placed next to the altar and very nearly worshipped. Generally subscribed to was the credo promulgated by the famous convert Orestes Brownson in the pages of his review "The American Republic" in 1865: "The United States, or the American Republic, has a mission, and is chosen by God for the realization of a great idea." Bishop Ireland, who upheld compulsory education in all its rigor, was he who proclaimed, "An honest ballot and social decorum will do more for God's glory and the salvation of souls than midnight flagellations and Campostellan pilgrimages!"

In 1857 Americanism made connections overseas with the establishment of an American College at the University of Louvain in Belgium, an ancient, partly state supported, independent institution which had long been a seat of liberalism. Erasmus had been closely associated with it, as had the Michael Baius whose heretical doctrine on sin and justification had laid the foundations of Jansenism. In our day it contributed many of the Vatican II reformers, among them Leo Suenens, who as Cardinal of Malines became its ex officio Chancellor. Bishop John Spalding, a Louvain graduate, had used this institution as inspiration for the Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

His uncle, Martin John Spalding, Bishop of Louisville and later Baltimore -- who at the First Vatican Council defended Fr. Hecker and also drew up a postulatum urging a definition of papal infallibility by implication rather than by outright affirmation -- had first conceived the idea of an American college at Louvain while touring Europe recruiting clergy, thinking to train priests there for the American ministry. He and Bishop Lefevre of Detroit ultimately provided the financial support, and eventually it became a center where American clergy went abroad to study and absorb the more advanced ideas.

The College at Louvain was strenuously opposed by conservative Bishops like Francis Kenrick of Baltimore and Archbishop Hughes of New York, who had long desired an American College for training clergy in Rome under the direction of the Pope and a board of U. S. Bishops. A general collection was taken up on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe in 1858 to build on land donated by Pius IX, and the College opened the following year, with Mass celebrated on the same feast. A side altar was dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas. Many Bishops hoped the North American College in Rome would offset the influence of the Louvain-trained ecclesiastics, but it was a losing battle, for in due time it too became infected.

+

Democracy had been too solidly entrenched in the Church in America from the beginning. An ardent believer in the power of government by consensus, John Carroll had convened his first synod in 1791, where 22 priests of five different nationalities were brought together to lay down uniform discipline for the new Church without reference to national differences. During the suppression of the Jesuits he had established chapters of an organization he called "Select Body of the Clergy" whereby he and his fellow Jesuits might continue operating corporately, own property and even found Georgetown University. Two years after becoming Archbishop he laid plans for a National Council to be held in 1812, but this was frustrated by the War with England. The first of seven Provincial Councils was nevertheless held in Baltimore in 1829 after his death. These legislated for the entire U.S. until 1852, when Pius IX granted permission for a Plenary Council.

This First Plenary Council imposed the "Baltimore Ceremonial" on the whole Church in America without exception, besides ratifying the pronouncements of the previous provincial councils, so determined was the American Church to maintain its control over all "foreign" elements, now officially made to conform. It is noteworthy that when its decrees were submitted to Propaganda for approval, Rome deemed it necessary to warn the American Fathers -- among other things -- not to insist on conformity in customs unknown in the universal Church, lest the appearance of a national church be introduced. The Second Plenary Council of 1866, dealing largely with catechetical matters at the urging of Rome, was attended in its closing session by President Andrew Johnson. The Third Council, in 1884, was concerned with belatedly warning the American faithful against secret societies.

The National American Church being now evident to many Cardinals in Rome, on January 22, 1899 Pope Leo XIII was finally constrained to issue his famous letter to Cardinal Gibbons, Testem Benevolentiae, specifically outlining the heresy of Americanism and intending "to put an end to certain contentions which have arisen lately among you, and which disturb the minds, if not of all, at least of many." The Pope condemned the Americanist practice of watering down the Faith in a false ecumenical spirit, of promoting the false "liberty" proclaimed by the Revolution, of placing natural considerations and methods above the supernatural, and fomenting disdain for the religious life.

He reproved the liberties taken by Americans in ecclesiastical matters in imitation of "that liberty which, though quite recently introduced, is now the law and the foundation of almost every civil community," in other words, the democratic peril. He concluded by declaring that Americanism "raises the suspicion that there are some among you who conceive of and desire a church in America different from that which is in the rest of the world." In view of the foregoing pages, this is a masterpiece of papal understatement.

The Americanist Bishops rushed to disclaim any such aspirations, Bishop Ireland being among the first, and the Pope was apparently satisfied. Others were not so optimistic. Speaking for himself and his French confreres, Louis Isoard, Bishop of Nancy, wrote on George Washington's "feastday", February 22, to thank His Holiness for his letter to the Bishop of Baltimore: "I am well enough acquainted with the sentiments and misgivings of many of my colleagues in the episcopacy to take the liberty of conveying to Your Holiness our common thanks on the occasion of this new and signal benefit." Bishop Isoard could see ahead.

Hardly perceived at the time, a significant development in America's national Church took place in 1917 with the formation of the National War Council. An organization devised to coordinate the activities of American Catholics in World War I, it was largely promoted by the Paulist Fr. John Burke, then editor of the Americanist publication "Catholic World." The group was deemed so useful that after the Armistice, in 1919, approval was received from Benedict XV for its continuance as an annual Bishops' meeting which would be called the National Welfare Council and administered by a standing episcopal committee.

The prophetic voice immediately raised against this hydra was that of Bishop Charles McDonnell of Brooklyn, who warned that the organization's powers exceeded by far the provisions stipulated in the Pope's authorization, and that the authority of the Bishops in their respective dioceses was bound to be undermined. So many concurred in his opinion that a request for dissolution was laid before the Holy See, and Cardinal De Lai had no difficulty persuading the Pope that the Council in question would provide all the machinery necessary for the final construction of a democratic national Church in the U.S. Pope Benedict agreed to a decree of dissolution, but died before he could sign it.

His successor Pius XI was preparing to do so, but was dissuaded by the pressure put on him by certain members of the American hierarchy, who immediately sent Bishop Schrembs as their representative to Rome. What these pressures were can only be guessed at. All we know is that the Holy See was in financial straits at the time, and the American Church was very wealthy. Bishop Schrembs soon cabled happily from Rome: "Fight is won. Keep program Bishops' meeting September. Official notice will be cabled next week. Hard struggle. Complete victory."

Not to be overlooked are the strictures and limitations Pius XI sent along with his approval. He stipulated that meetings need not be held every year, and that even then no Bishop was obliged to attend. Minutes of the meetings were to be forwarded to the Holy See, and no decisions reached were to have force of law or bind in any way. Nor did the Holy Father approve the word "Council," suggesting it be changed to the less authoritative "Committee." Eventually "Conference" was adopted, and the first National Catholic Welfare Conference held in 1923.

"Meanwhile," ruled the Pope, "all should know that this organization however named, is not to be identified with the Catholic hierarchy itself in the United States." There must be no infringement of the canonical authority of any Bishop, and "on the due denunciation by a Bishop, and proof of interference in the internal management of a diocese by any agent of the Welfare Council, the said agent shall be summarily dismissed from office."

But the fatal breach had been made. The NCWC became the central coordinating agency of all the Church's official activities, with the gigantic bureaucratic possibilities we all are now familiar with. In 1967 its name became openly the U.S. Catholic Conference, and the National Council of Catholic Bishops formed in accordance with the directives of Vatican II. In the decree Christus Dominus these had laid out for the whole world the democratic plan first tested in America under the sign of the Green Dragon:

"An episcopal conference is a kind of council in which the bishops of a given nation or territory jointly exercise their pastoral office. . . Decisions of the episcopal conference, provided they have been made lawfully and by the choice of at least two-thirds of the prelates who have a deliberative vote. . . are to have juridically binding force in those cases. . . prescribed by common law or determined by special mandate of the Holy See, given spontaneously or in response to a petition from the conference itself. . ." And there is added, "Bishops of many nations can establish a single conference. Moreover contacts between episcopal conferences of different nations should be encouraged. . ."

Implementing this Decree, Paul VI on September 15, 1965, in the motu proprio Apostolica Sollicitudo, did "erect and establish in this city of Rome a body for the universal Church," with a permanent Secretariat. Thus is the Synod of Bishops "chosen from various parts of the world,"and"constituted to be (1) a central ecclesiastical institution (2) representing the complete Catholic episcopate (3) by its nature perpetual," yet"(4) performing its duties for a time and when called upon. . . It may also have deliberative power, when such power is conferred on it by the Sovereign Pontiff."

So now, the world, with democracy established at the summit of the Church! The Carrolls would be gratified to hear that the American NCCB officially adopted as the theme of Catholic observance of the Nation's Bicentennial in 1976: JUSTICE IN THE WORLD.

+ + +

This article and Part I available from BIG ROCK PAPERS, R2 Box 158, Leesburg, Va. 22075 - 50¢ ea.

For the "other side" of history, read also:

THE STRANGE SPIRIT OF '76 (Parts I and II) $1.00
THE SECRET OF LA SALETTE, the inside story with authentic text 50¢; Text alone 25¢, 5 for $1.0
SAINT CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS? 50¢
LORD BALTIMORE'S BUNGLE 50¢
MASS IN THE LATTER DAYS 50¢
LUCIFER'S PRIMACY 50¢

WRITE FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS